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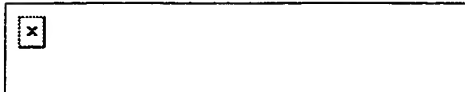
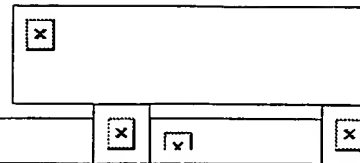
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-	1	("5921864").PN.	USPAT; US-PGPUB	2003/06/13 08:45
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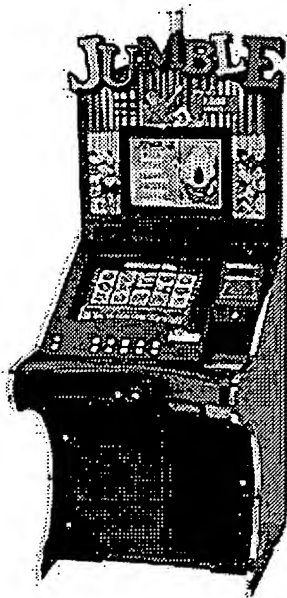
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## Feature by Frank Legato

### Bonus Buzz

WMS Gaming's "Jumble" brings the popular scrambled-word game to life



If you subscribe to a major metropolitan newspaper, chances are you've seen the game: a series of words with the letters scrambled. Your mission is to unscramble the words. "Jumble" has appeared daily in some 600 newspapers around the country for about 45 years. But now, the popular game can be played after you put down the newspaper and go to the casino. Chicago-based WMS Gaming recently released the "Jumble" bonus video slot, a multiline video game in the dual-screen platform. This platform proved to be a hit with players in its inaugural run, "Cast for Cash," the sequel to the groundbreaking WMS game "Reel 'Em In."

"Jumble" is the first in a series of WMS bonus slots, called the "Puzzle Pays" series. Each involve word games of one type or another.

"We were looking for puzzle games to convert into slot themes-games which by their very nature involved player interaction," explains John Giobbi, vice president of product development at WMS Gaming. "We were already working on securing licensing for 'Scrabble' and 'Pictionary' when we began considering 'Jumble.' It's a

theme that is instantly recognizable, since it's featured in newspapers across the country."

WMS went no further than its own back yard to secure licensing rights for the game-it's owned by a unit of Tribune Company, parent of the Chicago Tribune.

"Many players already know the game, but it is easily understood even by those unfamiliar with the newspaper version," Giobbi says. "It is easy to pick up, and players enjoy it. It's humorous, lighthearted, and features a lot of ways to win."

The slot is being offered primarily in nickel version in the Nevada market, with quarter versions to be added in the East. The base game is a nine-line video slot with two monitors. The secondary, top-box video screen shows a beehive beside the traditional Jumble puzzle-five words with the letters scrambled.

The main bonus event is triggered when the "JU," "MB" and "LE" symbols line up on the middle reels to spell the game title. The primary screen fades and reappears as an "audience" of animated bees. On the upper screen, the game show host ("Buzz Buzzby," a smarmy bee with a microphone, a toothy grin and a huge, wavy coiffure) and the queen bee, a Vanna White-style hostess ("Queenie Monroe," in a tight skirt and Marilyn-style hairdo), emerge from the hive and fly around.

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The player is prompted to pick one of the bees in the audience. (The bees chatter funny lines while the player is making his picks.) The bee selected either tosses a letter to the hostess to help solve the puzzle or throws up a special tile that multiplies the bonus values in the puzzle. The player picks audience members until one word in the puzzle is solved.

The player is paid a bonus value for each letter that fits into the puzzle. That value accumulates for each spot in which the letter fits, including multiple uses in a single word and in any other words on the puzzle screen.

The bonus value depends on which word or words the player succeeds in spelling. One letter may complete more than one word on the screen; all of the values are added together. (The words on the puzzle board start out short and get longer further down the screen; the longer words pay larger bonuses.)

Random audience members toss double-pay and triple-pay tiles to the hostess-which means all solved words are paid out at twice or three times their normal value.

The two screens work together in the bonus round. The audience member tosses a letter toward the upper screen, where it reappears and is caught by the hostess, who puts it in place until the word is complete. The WMS software engineers were masterful on this feature-the timing is perfect. The player's perception is that the letter travels from the lower screen to the upper screen in a seamless, uninterrupted motion.

There are a couple of aspects of the bonus game in Jumble that distinguish it from most multiline video slots. First, you'll notice that there is a comparatively long time between bonus rounds. The main bonus screen occurs only once every 225 spins, less than half as frequently than the main bonus event in a slot such as "Cast for Cash."

The trade-off for this, however, is that the bonus is usually very meaty-a top amount of over 1,400 coins.

Additionally, you'll find that this is an exceptionally long bonus round compared to other multiline video slots. This is because of the entertainment inherent in the game-the chatter of the bees, the fun of the puzzle game. It's definitely worth the wait.

Other second-screen bonus events can solve words in the puzzle without going into the main bonus game. Three "BUZZ" symbols scattered on the primary reels trigger the "Swap Bonus," in which a bee flies out of the hive to one of the five scrambled words and swaps two letters. If that unscrambles the word, the player touches one of the letters to reveal a number, which is multiplied by the total bet for the bonus. The queen bee symbols cause the queen to come out of the hive and automatically unscramble one of the words. The player then selects the multiplier in the same manner.

*lucky letter*

An additional bonus amount is paid when the entire puzzle is solved as a result of any of the bonus events, after which a new puzzle appears.

"It's all very entertaining to watch," says Giobbi. "You come to know which letters to watch for to solve the biggest words and therefore get the biggest bonuses."

Initial player reaction to Jumble indicates that they're having a lot of fun with this game. Since its release on September 1, it has been generating three times the house average in action in most locations, according to Giobbi.

Two more games in the Puzzle Pays series, "Scrabble" and "Pictionary," will be released within the next year.

"Scrabble," pegged for release next spring, is based on the legendary crossword-puzzle board game created by Alfred Butts in the 1930s. WMS is licensing the brand from current owner Hasbro, which also owns the Monopoly brand.

The third game in the series, scheduled for a summer 2001 release, is "Pictionary." Based on the wildly popular board game introduced in 1985, the game involves one player on a team picking a secret word and trying to get teammates to guess it within 60 seconds by drawing a picture representing the word.

Also watch for more video slots in the dual-screen format, which has received phenomenal initial response from players. The next two to be released are "Money Grab," a new game in the Monopoly series (it features a money booth on top with swirling Monopoly money and the game's main character inside), and "Ready to Rumble Boxing," a great boxing game featuring announcer Michael Buffer's famous tag line used to introduce boxing matches.

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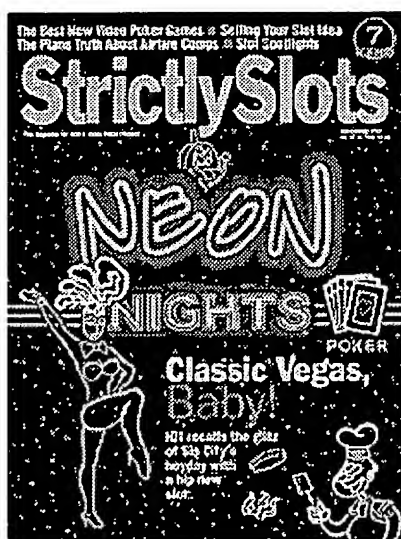
  


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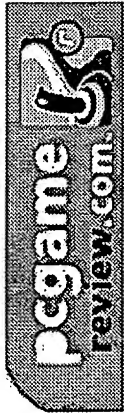
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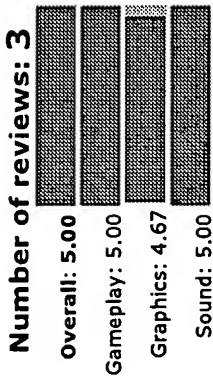
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## Wheel Of Fortune by Hasbro Interactive



Box Shot

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Markus from Somewhere in Canada on 7/8/2000 3:23:39 PM

Others rated this review: 2/4 -- Number of Ratings: 3

**General/Summary:** From the makers of a whole bunch of really cheesy board-game translations comes, yes, an even cheesier yet still fun game-show translation!

Wheel of Fortune is wonderful. The fantasy prizes are great and at times silly, the sound and graphics are top-of-the-line, the gameplay is well-executed. What can I say? Lots.

**Gameplay:** I found one interesting quirk with this, and most other Hasbro Interactive games, that it runs FASTER when I have LESS memory. I do not understand this, but it means that the game is choppy if I'm playing right after turning the computer on. The actual game is just like the gameshow, the interface obvious, and the variations nice but unnecessary. (Why would you want to "Challenge Yourself" when you can play against computer opponents for fake money?)

**Graphics:** I was blown away by the graphics here. The wheel spins, the letters fly around (nice touch), and Vanna really looks like Vanna. (I once played a primitive MS-DOS version running in 8 colors... ouch.) It's nice to finally have a full-screen game for 800x600. Fabulous.

**Sound:** The sound is very realistic, especially the audience. They gasp and cheer at the appropriate times, and even gasp if the wheel lands close to a Bankrupt. The clapping sound is seamless. Also, the computer opponents sound real ("Big money! Big money! Big money!") Just watch the show sometime - you'll be surprised.

I found this review: [Exceptionally Helpful](#) (4) [Helpful](#) (3) [Somewhat Helpful](#) (2) [Not Helpful](#) (1)

Mustafa Cengiz Guler from Istanbul-TURKEY on 9/1/1999

Others rated this review: 2/4 -- Number of Ratings: 3

**General/Summary:** Wheel Of Fortune has good gameplay. Graphics and sounds are the very best.

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Sam Johnson from Pittsburgh PA on 1/25/1999

Others rated this review: 1/4 -- Number of Ratings: 3

**General/Summary:** Hasbro has just released a new version of the popular game show "Wheel of Fortune." It is very realistic. It features Vanna White, has the new puzzle board and everything is state of the art. You can play a normal game which is just like the TV show, or if you're alone and don't want to face computer players there's the solo mode. Graphics are very good, quite smooth on my aging P200. All in all if you're a big fan of the show like I am you'll enjoy this CD-ROM version. It's about as close as you can get to being a contestant on the show and great practice for anyone who wants to be one. The only downside is the graphics don't make much use of the PC's potential, But considering what type of game this is that's no problem.

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